

Introduction

Wisconsin, rich with a broad array of cultural and natural resources, is known nationally for its exceptional water features. During the past two years, our state has made significant gains in the area of watershed management and protection. Governor Doyle's successful water initiatives include the passage of landmark legislation to protect both groundwater and sensitive surface water features from excessive consumptive uses; recognition of our significant Great Lakes through special management efforts to restore and protect this globally renowned resource; ramping up monitoring and educational outreach to stem the influx of aquatic nuisance species into our precious waterways; developing a special office to provide comprehensive environmental analyses of large-scale energy proposals in the state; and a steadfast commitment to fully implement the Clean Water Act while maximizing the efficiency of permitting processes.

This 2002-04 Water Quality Assessment Report describes our state's special resources and the programs and projects that help protect them. The work described reflects the DNR's commitment to four key goals: implementing the Clean Water Act, preserving the public trust doctrine, maintaining healthy fisheries, and protecting our groundwater for future generations. The hows, whys and results of our efforts to achieve these goals are described, and specific public and private activities to improve, protect and better understand our aquatic treasures are highlighted.

